DRAFT VISION 3.0
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With new transportation technologies and engineering breakthroughs arriving nearly every day, Idaho citizens can only imagine how a statewide transportation system might look by the year 2033. They can, however, clearly define how they hope that future system will serve their communities and their state. As shown by the results of the recent statewide Visioning Process, Idaho citizens already see a need for a broader variety of transportation options. These options should effectively, conveniently, and safely get them to and from all their destinations—no matter where that might be. Just as importantly, they want their transportation choices to evolve intelligently over the next 30 years, which will require thoughtful evaluation, careful planning, preservation of options, and coordinated work efforts.

The 30-year vision for Idaho's transportation system presented within this report includes the following components:

- Why Focus on the Future of Transportation
- Choices for All Individuals
- Putting the Pieces Together
- How We Got Here
- Where Do We Go Next

What the Transportation System should Value: This vision begins to build upon what the transportation system of the future means by **focusing on principles and values**. Those principles and values will guide both the vision and the development of that system to ensure that proposed additions and modifications will:

- Meet the Mobility Need
- Be Compatible with the Environment
- Be Flexible and Responsive
- Be an Asset to the Community

What the System should Accomplish: As the concept of this future transportation system begins to take shape, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and its partners recognize the importance of planning, preserving, providing, and connecting different means of transportation to best serve Idaho's citizens. Already, Idahoans ship freight by truck, air, barge, or rail, travel by car and air for recreation and work, bicycle to the store, walk for short errands, and take buses to shop. There is, however, an emerging interest in mass transit, rail services, and affordable air shuttles, as well as new engineering designs that can make those alternatives available in places where they have previously been unavailable. In addition, the recent trend toward telecommuting is having an impact on transportation, as more and more people opt to limit their days in the office…and their time commuting. Our lifestyles are changing, and our ideas about where we all need to go and how we all want to get there are changing too. By preserving diverse options, which can be mixed and matched as needed by the citizens who use them, Idaho's statewide transportation **system of the future will support** the flow of:

- People
- Finished goods
- Raw materials and products
- Information

How the System should Perform: Implementing the different components of this envisioned system will demand a wide-angle viewpoint that includes multiple groups, businesses, and individuals. The needs of these entities must be merged and met as the system expands with our growing communities. In the coming years, our progress will be measured not just by what means of transportation are available, but how well those means are integrated with current infrastructure and land use choices. Further, planning and preservation of options for all means of movement must support our quality of life, commerce, history, environment, and people. While not in any order of importance, Idaho's statewide transportation **system of the future will be**:

- Accessible
- Reliable and Predictable
- Convenient
- Connected
- Flexible
- Safe

How Do We Get There: The choices we make today will create our path to the future. ITD and its partners envision a 2033 transportation system built on partnerships formed by public and private users, providers, and owners coming together to pool ideas, share needs, plan and preserve options, and discuss solutions. Many organizations are committed to making Idaho's future transportation system a reality. A strong vision will help in the decisionmaking, policy planning, preservation of options, and project development. As our state takes these first critical steps on its three-decade journey into Idaho's transportation future, we welcome the opinions and suggestions of our fellow travelers. Together, we're all seeing an Idaho transportation system that keeps us moving…in the direction we want to go.

The graphic included in the document gives a single-picture summary of the flow and interconnection among the principles and values, as well as the priorities. However, this single picture has not been fully translated to reflect citizen's and stakeholder's needs and desires. This requires the next steps in the visioning process, i.e., compilation of focus areas, strategies, and performance measures that will result in an overall implementation approach. The single picture will also have to be adapted to each agency's mission. This is achieved by combining agency missions with their roles in leading, supporting, implementing, and measuring various components of the entire statewide vision. Finally, continued citizen and stakeholder involvement and education will be essential for achieving the vision. Each of these partner's participation will be critical to achieving the vision.

Where Do We Go Next: In summary, part of a compelling vision is one that we can see as a single picture. What did we see as we listened and learned together about the future? We saw:

- A future where everyone in the state could safely, comfortably, and reliably get to where they need to be.
- Professionals and the aging population with multiple transportation modal options for use in their daily life, including taking a bus, carpooling, walking, or bicycling.
- Communities with well-planned and well-coordinated land use and transportation systems that include many functional ways of traveling from point to point.
- Parks, bicycle paths, and walkable neighborhoods supported by communities.
- Goods and services moving easily within and through the state resulting in vibrant, growing economies.
- Families with the choice to spend less time in their cars and more time together enjoying their lives.

Why Focus on the Future of Transportation?

Most of us don't think much about complex transportation systems. If our cars run, if we make all the green lights on the way to work, if the school bus is on time, if construction slows traffic, if a crash happens up the road: those are the transportation challenges we face, handle, and then forget on a daily basis. That makes it easy to overlook the fact that these highly personal concerns are partially a result of what the current transportation system does, and does not, have to offer. In Idaho, transportation services for air, rail, and other modes are limited by many factors. How Idahoans choose to travel is based, in part, on the current transportation services available throughout our state. Thirty years from now, that will still be true. But 30 years from now, Idaho may look a lot different. If we want the transportation choices we see in the year 2033 to meet our needs, we must envision and describe them now.

Population: In creating a meaningful vision for transportation in the future, ITD, the Idaho Transportation Board, its partners, stakeholders, and concerned citizens first needed to imagine future Idahoans. Projections of Idaho demographics and growth give us insight into how transportation systems must change and develop to accommodate a changing population.

Mode or modal are transportation terms that refer to the different kinds of transportation we can use. Examples of modes include: transit, walking, air, automobile, trains, trucks, and/or bicycling. Modal balance is the effort to ensure that a transportation system safely supports the use of many different kinds of modes.

Some significant demographic themes that are anticipated to affect the transportation system of the future are:

- An aging population. The average age in the U.S. in general will shift from 35 in 2000 to 45+ in 2033. In Idaho, more than 25% of the population will be over 65 in 2033. This trend may have the single strongest impact on transportation system needs as an aging, healthy population with disposable income seeks to continue a viable life in what could be an average life expectancy of 100 years!
- The "echo boom" generation. Those are people born between 1979 and 1994—a number that approaches 60 million in the U.S. This generation will be the core of the economic engine in 2033. Raised in an era of relative privilege and prosperity, this generation will expect a number of choices and highly convenient services.
- The "services" sector of the national and state economy. This sector is predicted to continue to outpace economic growth from production based on natural resources, instead reflecting areas such as increased tourism and technological advancements.
- The overall U.S. population. While national population will likely stop growing by 2033 (through the current reduction and leveling of the birth rate), certain areas of the country—particularly western and southern states and urban areas are expected to see a significant population increase through immigration from other states and foreign countries. According to the Idaho Department of Commerce, by 2030 Idaho's population is expected to increase to 1.9 million people from its current population of 1.3 million. In the west, much of the

growth will be Latino and Asian populations, many of whom may choose to live in metropolitan/urban or rural areas similar to ones from which they have moved. They will be much more likely to expect and use public transportation in the metropolitan areas.

Area Classification Definitions:
Rural = less than 5,000 in population
Urban = between 5,000 and 50,000 in population
Metropolitan = greater than 50,000 in population

Because these changes will affect us all in the future, we must begin to prepare for them while we have time to think, envision, plan, and preserve.

The future must also consider the opinions of current Idahoans. In a recent scientific public opinion survey performed during the Visioning Process (described in detail under "How We Got Here"), citizens expressed both their views of the present system and their concerns for the systems of the future. While generally satisfied with the current (primarily highway-focused) transportation system, they worry that congestion and poor road conditions will likely increase in the future, and see public transportation as a weakness in the current transportation system.

Creating a transportation system that meets the demands of a diverse and changing population requires clear goals and priorities. The Transportation System of the Future will:

- Be planned, preserved, developed, operated, and maintained in a fully integrated manner.
- Support quality of life and be endorsed by citizens and stakeholders who own and operate the system.
- Be provided through adequate funding that allows multimodal flexibility, with state and local commitment to integrated transportation and land-use planning.
- Support modal choices for all individuals and clearly address the needs of all populations, including those with low incomes, people with disabilities, and the aging population.

Over the course of time, dozens of decisions will be made to achieve these goals, as well as the ones that will inevitably emerge throughout the development of the system. During the Visioning Process, however, one key objective was to pinpoint the overarching attributes the future system should offer Idaho. Participants at six regional workshops during the spring of 2003 determined that **the ideal transportation system would be accessible, reliable, and predictable, convenient, connected, affordable, flexible, and safe.** In short, the ideal transportation system of the future would offer all individuals a range of choices.

Choices for All Individuals

Bringing together Idahoans from all walks of life during the Visioning Process resulted in a big picture colored with many options. The following describes the various components of Idaho's future transportation system, as envisioned by our participants.

Highways: Highway corridors will continue to be the core component of the surface transportation system. While their use today is primarily for trucks and cars, highways will need to accommodate new uses and vehicles as technologies and land uses change. For example, the highway system in congested metropolitan areas could increase capacity through the use of dedicated lanes for high-capacity transit or other modes through expanded planning and preservation. To decrease congestion and transit times, existing highway ROW could potentially accommodate commuter trains or high-occupancy vehicles using guided highway systems. The bulk of the essential highway network is currently in place, but some highway realignment,

alignment completion, and added capacity will continue to be put in place. Preservation of such corridors allows for many more modes and options in the future.

The citizens of Idaho aspire to have a transportation system that provides convenient access throughout the state and region. They want different means of transport to support the vitality of the state's economy, an abundance of family wage jobs, and "the Idaho way of life." They recognize the need for the efficient, expeditious flow of freight and other "through traffic" along highways and between airports. They appreciate the ability to slow down to enjoy recreational opportunities afforded by Idaho's natural beauty. Across every region, they also desire well-connected pedestrian and bicycle facilities so they do not always have to move in vehicles.

Passenger Rail: Citizens envision passenger rail (light rail or commuter) service to communities within the Treasure Valley. Similarly, there is a strong desire to provide intercity rail service in the future from Boise south and east through Burley, Pocatello, and Idaho Falls with connections to the national passenger rail system (AMTRAK). The timing of passenger rail will depend on when the combination of technology, funding, and enough demand (people who want to use the train) develops. Light train configurations (one to three-car self-propelled trains) significantly decrease the expense of passenger train service.

Bus and Other Public Transit: Transit plays a key role within communities in Idaho's future transportation system. Market-based transit services can offer a variety of transit services. These services vary in scope—meaning number of stops and frequency of service. Transit buses are increasingly convenient and comfortable, and may provide a viable alternative to driving. Public transportation may play a key role in transportation safety as baby boomers consider voluntarily shifting from private vehicles to convenient transit to avoid the expense and potential for accidents.

Airports: Although for-hire private aviation companies serve many Idaho airports, regularly scheduled commercial air service is currently available only in Boise, Pocatello, Idaho Falls, Moscow/Pullman, Twin Falls, Hailey, and Lewiston. The cost and convenience of air travel varies considerably among these cities. The transportation vision includes the ability to develop additional commercial air and freight service through planning and preservation. This is accomplished through the expansion of regional airports or through the use of rapid ground transportation to existing regional airports. The goal would be better connections between local community and regional airports located throughout Idaho.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities: In the future system, pedestrian and bicycle facilities become an integrated part of the surface transportation system. Cyclists and pedestrians are expected and respected as legitimate users of all roadway corridors with designers recognizing that each mode impacts the efficiency of the other. In other words, to maximize efficiency for one mode at the expense of the other is not in the interest of a well-designed, multimodal system. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities have been well integrated into all roadway corridors.

Information Technology Systems: Information technology plays a key role in Idaho's transportation future. In larger communities where there is an abundance of workers whose jobs are largely computer-based and focused on working with information, there is a significant amount of telecommuting. Many communities have also provided neighborhood telecommute centers. Some people work from home on a daily basis while many others work at home 1 or 2 days per week. Because of reduced work travel, congestion during commute times has been significantly reduced. A second reduction comes through electronic commerce. With an

increase in online shopping and purchasing, there is a decrease in the number of "optional" travel trips within urban and metropolitan areas. The increase in inter-city freight delivery (for door-to-door Internet orders) is organized to be efficient (and profitable). Therefore, there has been a significant overall decrease in personal cars or trucks, along with increased freight and delivery services on the roads.

Freight (by road, rail, air, and water): With six states and Canada adjoining Idaho, along with the furthest inland port in the western U.S., the transport of freight across Idaho continues to be vital to the economic vitality of the state and nation. To address concerns about safety and compatibility between cars and trucks, several system solutions have been put in place through effective planning and preservation of freight corridors. In some locations existing rail systems were maximized and realigned as rail corridors to pick up the additional movement of freight. In many places on the interstate system, truck freight is moving on a dedicated and electronically monitored system. For example, the Port of Lewiston has begun addressing freight traffic through an improved and consolidated port/rail/truck loading center. Similarly, air freight will see a substantial increase in the future.

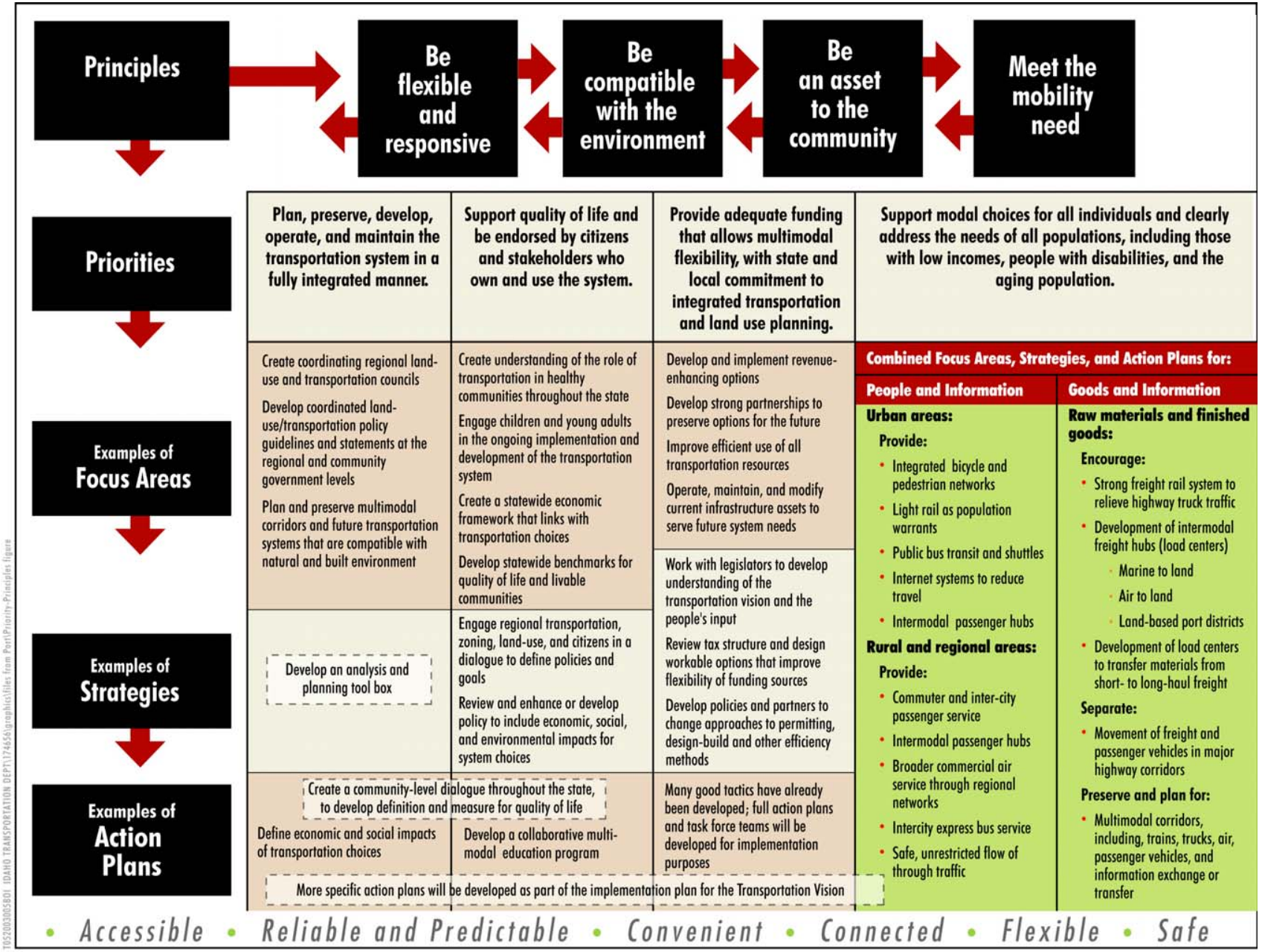
This integrated approach to transportation addresses mobility needs for a diversity of users. Mobility has been increased by providing a broader variety of transportation modes. For example, while the highway system will remain a dominant component of the surface transportation system, the provision of other modes (rail, truck, air, information transmission or exchange, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle) will play an increasing role.

Long-range planning does not deal with future decisions, but with the future of present decisions.
-Peter Drucker

Putting the Pieces Together

As our vision for the transportation system of the future sharpens and matures, we will increasingly explore new methods to coordinate transportation planning and multimodal corridor preservation activities, address economic, social, and environmental impacts, communicate with the business community and the public, and search for flexible funding alternatives. The following graphic begins to put those pieces of the vision together. This single-picture summarizes the flow and interconnection among the principles and values, as well as the priorities. Initial examples of the focus areas and strategies necessary to fully implement system priorities are also included for discussion purposes.

Coordination and implementation will require an internal and external focus. For example, ITD considers itself a key part of the transportation service and provision community. However, ITD is only one part. Along with others in an integrated implementation approach, we may consider how we meet our mission by coordinating it with focus areas, strategies, and action plans necessary for implementing the vision. We expect our partners to do the same, as we all have different roles for leading, supporting, implementing, and measuring different efforts under the broader vision. Further, ITD and its partners will continue to be affected by social, economic, and political decisions from many levels. Only under an integrated planning and implementation approach can this vision be realized.


Principles
Be flexible and responsive
Be compatible with the environment
Be an asset to the community
Meet the mobility need
Priorities
Plan, preserve, develop, operate, and maintain the transportation system in a fully integrated manner.
Support quality of life and be endorsed by citizens and stakeholders who own and use the system.
Provide adequate funding that allows multimodal flexibility, with state and local commitment to integrated transportation and land use planning.
Support modal choices for all individuals and clearly address the needs of all populations, including those with low incomes, people with disabilities, and the aging population.
Examples of Focus Areas
Create coordinating regional land-use and transportation councils
Develop coordinated land-use/transportation policy guidelines and statements at the regional and community government levels
Plan and preserve multimodal corridors and future transportation systems that are compatible with natural and built environment
Create understanding of the role of transportation in healthy communities throughout the state
Engage children and young adults in the ongoing implementation and development of the transportation system
Create a statewide economic framework that links with transportation choices
Develop statewide benchmarks for quality of life and livable communities
Develop and implement revenue-enhancing options
Develop strong partnerships to preserve options for the future
Improve efficient use of all transportation resources
Operate, maintain, and modify current infrastructure assets to serve future system needs
Combined Focus Areas, Strategies, and Action Plans for:
People and Information
Urban areas:
Provide:
Integrated bicycle and pedestrian networks
Light rail as population warrants
Public bus transit and shuttles
Internet systems to reduce travel
Intermodal passenger hubs
Rural and regional areas:
Provide:
Commuter and inter-city passenger service
Intermodal passenger hubs
Broader commercial air service through regional networks
Intercity express bus service
Safe, unrestricted flow of through traffic
Goods and Information
Raw materials and finished goods:
Encourage:
Strong freight rail system to relieve highway truck traffic
Development of intermodal freight hubs (load centers)
Marine to land
Air to land
Land-based port districts
Development of load centers to transfer materials from short- to long-haul freight
Separate:
Movement of freight and passenger vehicles in major highway corridors
Preserve and plan for:
Multimodal corridors, including, trains, trucks, air, passenger vehicles, and information exchange or transfer
Examples of Strategies
Develop an analysis and planning tool box
Engage regional transportation, zoning, land-use, and citizens in a dialogue to define policies and goals
Review and enhance or develop policy to include economic, social, and environmental impacts for system choices
Work with legislators to develop understanding of the transportation vision and the people's input
Review tax structure and design workable options that improve flexibility of funding sources
Develop policies and partners to change approaches to permitting, design-build and other efficiency methods
Examples of Action Plans
Create a community-level dialogue throughout the state, to develop definition and measure for quality of life
Define economic and social impacts of transportation choices
Develop a collaborative multi-modal education program
Many good tactics have already been developed; full action plans and task force teams will be developed for implementation purposes
More specific action plans will be developed as part of the implementation plan for the Transportation Vision
• Accessible • Reliable and Predictable • Convenient • Connected • Flexible • Safe

The Importance of Measuring Implementation and Using Evaluation Tools

Since decisions made today affect the outcome of our future, there is a stated desire for a decisionmaking process that continues to guide and direct transportation leaders and implementers toward the preferred future. This decisionmaking process can be described as one that will preserve all options by continually measuring the effectiveness of an individual project or program to achieve the goals of the future system. Projects or programs that do not meet these measures would receive lower or no priority for funding and/or implementation. Complete measures for the system will be developed and updated on a regular basis. Initially, the following decisionmaking strategies will contribute to good choices for the future system.

Future Transportation System Implementation Strategies

- **Recognize continuing growth in mobility demand and determine ways to reduce its impact.** If the travel need can be met in a non-travel manner, demands for construction to expand the existing system can be limited. By starting with this educational strategy, it may be possible to eliminate, or at least reduce, the need for the other strategies. When workshop participants asked for an integrated approach to land use and transportation planning, they were focusing attention on addressing mobility demand in a non-travel manner. Community development that occurs with significant density creates walking and bicycling options that can dramatically reduce the need to expand existing road networks. Similarly, information technology solutions that allow people to work or shop from home, or neighborhood telecommute centers, as well as incentives or disincentives to driving, can also reduce the growth in demand.

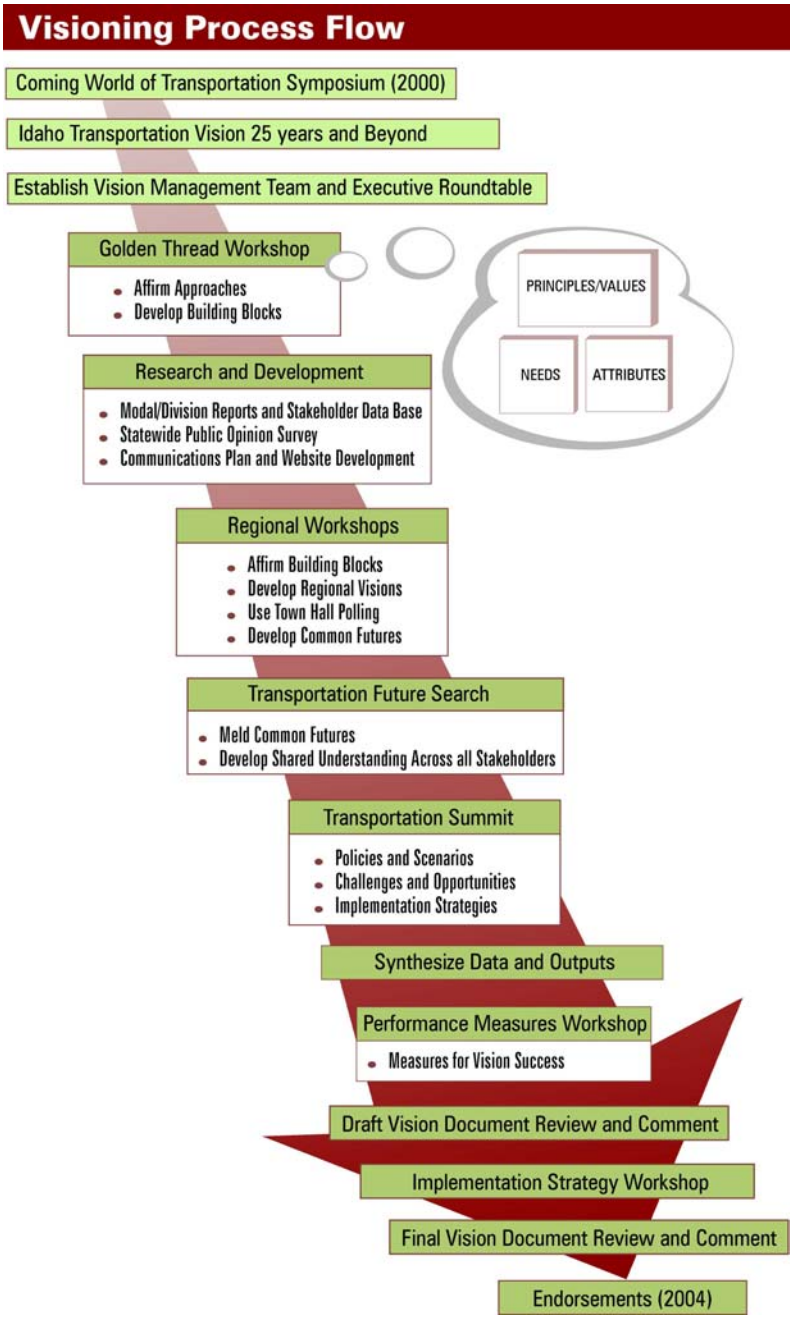
> System demand and capacity are terms that relate to the ability of any transportation mode to carry all the travelers that want to be on that system at any given time. Capacity issues are most significant at those times when people are traveling to work and school, as well as for recreational activities on weekends. These are referred to as "peak times." Many travelers, primarily on highway or city road systems, believe that there is a serious congestion problem and the need for more roads because they travel primarily, or only, at these peak times, when the system is most strained.

- **Balance highway solutions with other modes.** In many instances, the first strategy will not completely address the growth in demand. This second strategy can balance road and highway expansion by using higher capacity vehicles or other related modes to address the travel demand. For example, reliable and predictable transit service offers a high capacity solution within communities, when conditions warrant. Using the existing capacity of the rail network and airport network in Idaho to provide additional passenger and freight service are strategies for non-highway regional travel. Without increased planning and preservation of options, balance cannot be assured.

- **Maximize the efficiency of the existing system**. The third strategy focuses on maximizing capacity of the existing system through transportation planning and preservation of multimodal corridors. Education will play a key role in maximizing options, while requiring additional resources to do so. This strategy provides stronger ties (both technological and operational) between the state and local systems so the volume of vehicles is better channeled and distributed. Another approach is to ensure the availability of effective intermodal centers (such as park-and-ride lots) for transferring from cars to transit in rural to

urban situations. In each case, substantial capacity can be added by being informed and efficient about how choices are made.

- **Provide additional highway capacity**. The fourth strategy includes some highway system expansion that will likely be necessary to achieve the desired future. This expansion must be both adequate for provision of modal choice and done in the context of the overall priorities for a fully integrated and multimodal system. ITD and its partners will need to assist communities and regions with strategies that best meet their needs by bringing parties to the table when decisions are being made.



How We Got Here

The Visioning Process

"Idaho's Transportation Future: Getting There Together" is a process designed to understand and develop concepts for the transportation system the citizens of Idaho want in 30 years. Transportation infrastructure takes years to plan, modify, and build. Thinking 30 years ahead without constraints such as economics or politics gives us a better opportunity to respond and get to where we want to be. A strong vision will help in the decisionmaking, policy planning, and preservation of options and project development. There are many definitions and thoughts about what makes a vision, and even more importantly, why it matters. A primary reason to think about the future and develop a vision is simply this—the future will happen whether we plan for it or not.

Focusing only on what is currently possible or practical now greatly limits the future. The Idaho Transportation Board and ITD chose to involve many people to create a vision to help guide the future development of the transportation system. Building on our existing transportation system, our goal is

to be even more responsive to citizen and user needs and deliver the most desirable system possible.

For our vision to be fully achieved, we must begin today to make the choices that will ensure we get there. The process was designed to include a broad cross section of Idaho's population from all areas of the state. In addition to traditional transportation planning and policy providers, participants included Native Americans, social services, businesses, local governments, citizens, students, economic development communities, agricultural and environmental interests, and many others. More than 2,500 people were invited to join in this effort. Of that number, nearly 500 people participated in workshops held around the state. Further, a random telephone survey gathered the opinions of 600 "citizens-at-large" about Idaho's current and future transportation system.

The participants' work focused on developing a common understanding of the current state of the transportation system; learning about the key factors that will affect the transportation opportunities (and reality) of the future; and creating high-level priorities that must be in place for a transportation system of the future to be effective. Workshops were designed to build on information received through the involvement process and culminate in a shared understanding that will guide the vision for the future of transportation in Idaho. This vision is that shared understanding. It is a starting point for making the changes that will create the future we desire. The basic structure of the future system—guiding principles or values, key attributes, elements, and essential partnerships for the system of tomorrow are described in this document.

If you are interested in more detailed information from the workshops, outcomes, or the process please visit the website at http://www.idahofuturetravel.info/.

What the System Should Value: Guiding Principles for the Future System

Any successful system is based on guiding principles that tell us what the system is and under what values that system will operate. The principles for this vision address not only the fundamental questions related to mobility, but the community benefit and stewardship of the system as well. The principles for Idaho's Transportation System of the Future are shown in the graphic below.

It is important to note that a key insight of the discussions, and indeed one of the primary ingredients for successful implementation toward the vision, is that as we consider what we should do in the next 30 years, these principles can and likely will come in conflict with each other. The day-to-day choices that ITD and its partners make will move us toward our preferred future. Preserving multimodal options allows the fullest use of the agreed-upon principles, while balancing and managing the conflict between these principles as they arise.

Meet the Mobility Need. What is "mobility" as it relates to an effective transportation system? It means the ability to move freely in order to successfully live our daily lives—attend school, shop, play, move goods and services, and share information. There will be shifts in the next 30 years in how one goes from point to point, but most of the basic needs for mobility will remain. "Meet the Mobility Need" also includes the issue of effectiveness of the transportation system from a financial perspective as well as the user perspective. The user perspective often is referred to as system "attributes." You will see many of these attributes in the system elements described in this document. In brief, they are focused on a balanced system with good modal choices, comfort, safety, and reliability.

Be an Asset to the Community. For this principle, community is generally defined. It includes those groups, regions, stakeholders, and users that are affected by and use the system. Each community is responsible for defining itself and what constitutes success for a transportation system within its community. For the system of 2033 to be effective, the officials and leaders of different communities will need to work together to define, agree upon, and commit to the policies and approaches that will most effectively knit our transportation system together. Additionally, the infrastructure of the existing transportation system is seen as an asset that will require continued operation, maintenance, and modification to serve future system needs. Modification and/or expansion to address system needs must be done within the scale and context of the community to maintain the asset value. As with many tangible assets, foreclosing options by failing to preserve possibilities can be detrimental to long-term asset value.

Meeting the communities' needs can best be accomplished by respecting community values and engaging communities in the dialogue about transportation solutions including their benefits and impacts to the community and society.

Be Compatible with the Environment. Idaho has a history that is strongly associated with its natural resources. The theme of respect and value for our natural environment continues today and will continue into the future. With increased pressure on communities and transportation systems, there is also a need for a comprehensive and ongoing conversation about what constitutes "quality of life" and how to achieve our mobility goals while serving as stewards of our natural and historically built treasures for generations to come.

Be Flexible and Responsive. With this principle, we are addressing the fact that while planning for the future, time is passing. Many new needs, ideas, opportunities, and realities will arise in the next 30 years. We must remain constant and committed toward our vision of a fully balanced transportation system. This means that the vision must be open to options, opportunities, and community input as time passes.

What the System Should Accomplish: Defining the Needs of the Future System

The citizens of Idaho have consistently stated that the future transportation system should support the flow of:

- People
- Finished goods
- Raw materials and products
- Information

These flows support human needs that include health, jobs, recreation, safety, and the overall vitality of Idaho and Idaho businesses. As people included more detail about these needs and

changing demographics, the future transportation system must facilitate movement and connection by providing:

- Regional travel across the state and to adjoining states and Canada for personal needs, business, and tourism
- Well-planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities within and between communities
- Farm-to-market and forest-to-mill access
- Convenient access to recreational areas
- Balance between convenient access and maintaining lands in their natural state
- The flow of commerce to and from the state
- The flow of commerce within and through the state
- Better information technology to link people and businesses without traveling
- Enhanced public transportation
- Maximizing the current resources while leveraging the knowledge, experience, and resources of others, within and outside of Idaho

Public Opinion Survey Results

A scientific public opinion survey was used to develop a baseline profile of Idaho's statewide transportation system, focusing on travel, daily transportation activities, current and future concerns, and how to solve transportation problems. These opinions reflect both common and unique statewide concerns and priorities. Although scientific by nature, it is not possible to fully understand the level of awareness regarding transportation issues among those surveyed. Some of the general conclusions indicate that public opinion focused on immediate solutions, regardless of how expensive or efficient they might be, and not on a 30-year timeframe. As a result, information from the survey was primarily used in the regional workshops for comparison purposes. Further, when one considers the different participants and their information sources, anomalies can be found between the vision process participants and those surveyed. In general:

- The current transportation system (primarily highway-focused) is satisfactory.
- Mobility is not a problem.
- Congestion and poor road conditions resulting from increased use will likely increase in the future, requiring additional resources for maintenance and operations activities.
- Public transportation is seen as a significant weakness in the current transportation system, but was given a lower priority when comparing overall funding priorities.
- Transportation is seen as "very important" to many facets of life in Idaho.
- Citizens' immediate focus is on existing transportation options to solve a particular transportation problem and they favor remedies focused on transportation, not land-use choices.

How the System Should Perform: Defining the Attributes of the Future System

While the image of a system that matches a long-range vision can be described, events will likely occur that alter the parts or the entire image. Therefore, the process must provide for changes and adjustments that can be implemented in a consistent manner. Such consistency is provided by adhering to established transportation principles. Maintaining consistency in system elements can be ensured by creating measures related to a set of system attributes that

preserve options. These attributes describe the desirable qualities of the system. The following attributes of an ideal transportation system were identified by participants at the six regional workshops during the spring of 2003.

- **Accessible:** The system should provide access to all parts of the state. Additionally, the system should be accessible to all users regardless of income or their ability to operate an automobile.
- **Reliable/Predictable:** The system should be consistent and reliable across all modes. This means that the system is planned, preserved, operated, maintained, and configured in a balanced and multimodal manner. When traveling by car, bus, train, plane, bicycle, or walking, one can rely on transportation and the appropriate facilities to be there consistently when and where needed.
- **Convenient:** Modes of transportation such as trains, commercial aircraft, and buses should be available and reliable enough to allow an individual to conveniently reach their destination. In addition, terminals or connections to these modes should be located at convenient locations with safe and convenient pedestrian access between modes.
- **Connected:** In addition to connecting people and places, the system should provide for connections between modes. For example, bus riders and automobile drivers should be able to conveniently connect to rail or commercial air service and vice versa. Transfer of freight from one mode to another (truck to rail) is also convenient and efficient.
- **Affordable:** The use of the transportation system should not create undue burden on lower income or disadvantaged groups, while assuring that all income levels provide equitable financial support to the system.
- **Flexible:** To maximize the return on public investment, the transportation infrastructure should be planned and built in a way that allows for many possible uses. For example, rail, air, and road corridors are planned and preserved now for future transportation uses, thus keeping options open for how those corridors may be used.
- **Safe:** The system should provide a high level of safety and security for users as well as nearby non-users of the system.

The Transportation System: Integrated Modal Strategies

To achieve the aspirations for our state and for our transportation system, participants envisioned a future where:

The highway system corridors remain the backbone of the surface transportation network. These corridors will be multimodal in nature. As a result of corridor planning and preservation, the needs of those who own and use the transportation system will be met. Personal cars and trucks remain a key component of highway use, but there has been a shift to more modal balance. Likewise, public transportation, pedestrian, information technology, air, and bicycle travel are more available options. However, congestion remains an issue that can be managed through a number of strategies to address travel demand. Some envisioned examples:

- Commuter rail systems may be feasible in more populated metropolitan communities—as conditions warrant—providing a convenient mode of travel for commuting and inter-regional circulation.

- Regional travel between major Idaho cities is facilitated by a combination of passenger rail, and a network of airports with affordable lower-volume commercial air service, and personal modes such as the automobile.
- Freight originates, terminates, and moves within and through the state by air, barge, rail, and highways. Freight on busy highway corridors moves in dedicated freight lanes and traffic conflict is managed through set operating hours and the use of sites where trucks load and unload outside of congested areas.
- Computer systems that digitally monitor and facilitate the movement of cars and trucks from human-controlled remote locations, known as Intelligent Transportation Systems will increase the efficient flow of vehicles within a given corridor or region.
- The use of incentives to increase the use of transit, carpooling, vanpooling and rideshare, walking, and bicycling.

Travel within Idaho's communities is guided by:

- **The integration of land use and transportation planning to preserve options.** As population density increases, more people have opportunities to walk or bicycle short distances to their destinations. This integration can also greatly enhance the efficiency and use of public transportation.
- **Networks of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.** These networks support movement that is not car dependent, allowing for: easily accessed transit centers and regional tele-commuting sites, and safe walking and bicycling to work and schools.
- **Transit helping people travel within communities.** As the baby boom generation ages, many more citizens rely on transit for routine travel within their communities.
- **Improved networking for information technology.** This networking allows many people to work at home (or in using the neighborhood telecommute centers) at least several days per week or month.
- **Use of the Internet.** This involves using the Internet for shopping including groceries and other basic supplies.

Where Do We Go Next

System Priorities: The Policy Framework to Implement the Future System

In creating the vision for the transportation system of the future, a set of assumptions was developed that allowed future scenarios to work. Scenarios are different options for how the actual system might look, feel, and operate. These assumptions form the basis for the transportation system of the future. In other words, they help ensure that the system elements can be achieved as long as planning and preservation of options continues. These assumptions, when grouped together and in conjunction with the focus on an integrated transportation system, become the top priorities for a successful transportation system of the future. The priorities are strongly related not only to each other, but also to the principles. Combined with the system needs and attributes, they create a comprehensive framework for achieving the transportation system of the future. Focus areas and action plans will be developed to accompany each priority and to provide accountability and forethought. Continued citizen and stakeholder involvement and education will be essential for achieving the vision.

To better understand the real work and challenges associated with these priorities, a group of stakeholders developed both potential approaches and responsibilities for these priorities. This work will become part of the overall implementation plan for the vision. The following descriptions help provide a framework for each of these priorities.

Transportation of the future must be planned, preserved, developed, operated, and maintained in a fully integrated manner. Currently, transportation plans are created with attention to existing local and regional plans and public needs. In addition, there has been initial success in ensuring that all planning processes are well-integrated through such processes as corridor planning and integration with federal environmental procedures. The transportation services citizens are interested in requiring preservation, thoughtful development, and more education as to their implications. For instance, many citizens in Idaho (and nationwide) have stated that safe routes for kids to walk or ride bicycles to school is a high transportation priority. This can be accomplished through appropriate school location decisionmaking and also through the development of medium-density communities, where options like grid patterns, bicycle paths, and sidewalks are a part of the development pattern. Options can also be created through education of officials in existing communities about the addition of special transportation features such as bicycle paths, and traffic calming devices. The same community patterns are critical to good public transportation—whether it be buses, shuttles, or light rail. As the population ages, more citizens will want access to public transportation that is safe, easy to use, and affordable compared to private vehicle ownership.

An integrated planning approach will be required to achieve a balanced transportation system where modal choices exist beyond private vehicles. Oversight and integration from a policy-level group that has the ability to govern, coordinate, influence, and mediate development patterns, will be a requirement for success of this new approach. Additionally, ongoing education and provision of information about options can provide better decisionmaking.

Idaho's transportation future will support the quality of life and be endorsed by stakeholders and citizens who own and use the system. This priority is critical to both the success and context of the other priorities, as well as the potential to fully realize and improve upon the vision for any great system in the future. First and foremost, this priority acknowledges that citizens have the right to understand and develop the goals for quality of life. Second, the role that transportation plays should address the economic, social, and environmental health of the state. This will require a statewide dialogue, at community and regional levels, to better understand the desires for the state in the future.

There are a number of questions that can help shape the conversation in the state: What do we want economically? How do we want our communities to look and feel? What kinds of services do we want? How do we want to manage our natural resources? What role does transportation play in community, regional, and state success? What are the goals we hold for ourselves as a state—socially, economically, and environmentally?

This priority also addresses the issue that changes are required that will necessitate improved communication within and between communities. The need for these changes, and the benefits and challenges of different transportation system choices must be better understood by communities throughout the state. The creation of true multimodal systems will require changes in the patterns of priorities and spending, as well as the way people use, value, and preserve future options for the statewide transportation system. The job of educating, listening, and designing a system that is responsive to future needs requires an ongoing dialogue and

communications strategy that should be closely linked with the dialogue mentioned above for defining the quality-of-life goals for the state.

The transportation system of the future will be provided through adequate funding that allows multimodal flexibility, with state and local commitment to integrated transportation and land-use planning. There has been a clear message throughout the process that communities need support for expanding available funding to address the transportation solutions needed for economic vitality and livable communities. This may include such things as the ability to: raise local-option taxes, create funds through bonding, preserve rights-of-way for multimodal corridors, and use existing state and federal funds in more integrated and solutions-oriented ways. Adapting revenue sources to coincide with future vehicle fueling and propulsion systems could also be required to assure continued operation and maintenance of the transportation system. Implementation of this priority requires significant commitment to engaging with the legislature and Congress in a long-term, focused, and pro-active manner. In this priority, ITD and its partners see the interdependence of all the priorities—again reinforcing the need for a strong partnership approach among all the participants.

The transportation system of the future will support transportation choices for all individuals and clearly address the needs of all populations, including those with low incomes, people with disabilities, and the aging population. The definition of this priority is self-explanatory. This priority is both the goal and outcome of successfully accomplishing the other priorities.